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ABSTRACT

This paper presents findings of surveys completed by student teachers on their ability to prepare a teacher work sample, discussing potential program improvements arising from survey responses related to planning, assessment, and student learning, which are components of a teacher work sample, also sharing student teachers' perceptions of their preparation in using assessment to document impact on student learning. Student teachers designed units of instruction (teacher work samples), then identified and sequenced learning goals for a classroom of students which reflected state standards for learning; aligned instruction and assessment with learning goals to be accomplished; monitored the progress of each student toward those goals; adapted instruction to accommodate each student's needs; and meaningfully summarized and reported each child's progress. These work samples provided an organizing framework for evaluation, assessment, and reflection of a unit of instruction. Student teachers were specifically asked about decisions regarding teaching content and pedagogy, improvement of teaching methods, and uses of assessment data. The pre- and post-surveys and survey data are attached. (Contains 16 references.) (SM)

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Dr. Nancy Keese
Middle Tennessee State University

Title Student Teacher Input and Teacher Work Sample as Part of a Teacher Education Unit Accountability System

ED 479 799

Strand and Area
Research: What do we need to know?

Summary
Findings of surveys completed by student teachers on their ability to prepare a teacher work sample will be presented. Potential program improvements arising from survey responses related to planning, assessment, and student learning will be discussed.

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Dr. Nancy Keese
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Title Student Teacher Input and Teacher Work Sample as Part of a Teacher Education Unit Accountability System

Objectives

- To present the results of student teacher pre- and post-responses to questions relating to planning, instruction, and assessment, which are components of a teacher work sample.
- To share student teachers' perceptions of their preparation in the use of assessment to document impact on student learning.
- To present potential uses of the data analysis for improving the teacher education program and communication with practioners.
- To show the components of the research instruments and how they relate to the teacher work sample and to curriculum development.

Relationship to Theme and Strand

Using data to support the continued development of curriculum in a teacher education program is a sound and supported practice. In addition to the traditional data such as scores and grades, the consideration of input from student teachers as valued information may give a different perspective of the teacher education program. Reflection on this input for course improvement may indicate ways to help the program meet the needs of the teacher candidates.

This presentation will share the findings and conclusions resulting from responses of student teachers that were involved in student teaching at the time. A case will be made as to why this information is needed and how it may be used to revise courses, practicum, and field experiences to better prepare the student teachers in the use of assessment for planning and evaluation.

Summary of Presentation

Student teachers have a keen awareness of and acute need for assessment. During their careers as students, assessment has been a part of their lives as learners. Reversing their role from assessee to the assessor is a valued transition, but one that should emphasize the importance of the data they gather from assessments for evaluation of student learning and instruction. Using data to improve teaching practices and to measure impact on student learning is critical if all children are to learn and be successful, and thus no child will be left behind.

The use of examples and simulations during a university class, gives the student teacher some ability to understand, reflect on, and talk about assessment. However, the tasks of clarifying goals for assessment, designing assessment aligned with the goals, and using the results of the assessment for improvement in the classroom may require more support and experience than student teachers are presently receiving.

Pre- and post-survey instruments used in the present research were completed by approximately 50 student teachers over 2 semesters. The areas of Elementary Education,

Special Education, Early Childhood Education, and Secondary Education were represented. Questions relating to planning, assessment, student learning, mentoring and support were asked. Student teachers were specifically asked about decisions regarding teaching content and pedagogy, improvement of teaching methods, and uses of assessment data. Responses of student teachers to the surveys will be presented including data that will illustrate their perceptions of the teacher work sample as a method to document student learning. Student teachers evaluation of their preparation to design and use assessment during student teaching will be discussed. Pre- and post- responses will be analyzed.

Plans for Participant Involvement

The presenters will share the survey instruments and the knowledge gathered from the data. Examples of the surveys will be available. The elements of the teacher work sample methodology will be discussed and distributed to the audience. Audience questions, answers, and contributions will be encouraged throughout the presentation. An interactive discussion of the use of the findings as they relate to teacher education programs and to the teacher work sample will follow the presentation.

Tammie Brown and Nancy Keese
MTSU

Student Teacher Input and Teacher Work Sample as Part of a Teacher Education Unit Accountability System

In his introduction to the national initiative, *No Child Left Behind* (2001), President George W. Bush states, "The federal role in education is not to serve the system. It is to serve the children." This national initiative calls for increased accountability for student performance, closing the achievement gap, and improving teacher quality. Although teacher training is an ongoing process, the focus on teacher performance and how it affects student learning is at the forefront of accountability. As practicing educators engage in professional development activities, they must be provided with the opportunities to actively involve their own students in order to effect change. The process of practitioner action research is one means of enabling educators to utilize their professional development activities as a relevant and meaningful process to ensure student success.

According to Calhoun (2002), action research can change the social system in schools and other educational organizations. The process provides the continual formal learning that should be expected and supported. By using a structured model of action research, teachers can actually see a connection between professional development and student performance. In addition, by involving public school students as well as pre-service teachers, the continuous process of learning and achievement is developed.

In this process, work sampling resembles what teacher educators typically acquire with the assumption of full responsibility for classroom instruction. A teacher plans for instruction which includes a description of the learning outcomes students are expected to accomplish, the classroom organization and learning activities that are to lead to these outcomes, and the means by which student learning will be assessed to determine whether the outcomes intended have in

fact been accomplished. The principal usually makes the evaluation of the plan. Feedback to the teacher is provided on the basis of observations and evaluations discussed. Following the implementation of the teacher work sample, teachers are asked to reflect upon their teaching from the their own perspective of perceived strengths and weaknesses of their teaching and delivery.

Because of the natural flow of the work sample into a normal school day, many teacher preparation programs include work sampling as part of the graduation requirements for the pre-service teachers. These pre-service teachers design units of instruction—"teacher work samples,"—and then identify and sequence learning goals for a classroom of students which reflect state standards for learning; align instruction and assessment with learning goals to be accomplished; monitor the progress each student is making toward these goals; adapt instruction to accommodate where each student stands in his or her journey toward their accomplishment; and meaningfully summarize and report the progress made by each child. As such, teacher work samples provide an organizing framework for evaluation, assessment, and reflection of a unit of instruction.

To be effective as facilitators of learning, teachers must vary their instructional plans and procedures to accommodate differences in students, subject matter, learning goals, available resources for instruction, and time available for teaching. The teacher that is always searching for the appropriate approach to accommodate the various aspects of instruction, content area knowledge, and pedagogical methods must use a decision-making process that provides for continuous change and updates (Doyle, 1986; Corno & Snow, 1986).

Effective teaching is more than implementing a few basic skills. It also requires the ability to implement a large number of diagnostic, instructional, managerial, and therapeutic skills, and tailoring behavior in specific contexts and situations to the specific needs of the

moment. Effective teachers must multifunction and select the correct function for the appropriate moment and perform that function correctly and effectively (Brophy and Evertson, 1976). This is a conception of teaching that represents the reality of the decisions that confront a teacher who assumes responsibility for student learning (Schalock, 2000). A misrepresentation of the reality of teaching occurs when what is to be learned as well as the context in which learning will transpire is not considered.

Student learning is the yardstick for both teacher and teacher educators. Proceeding to best practices will occur when teachers are able to nurture the kind of student learning that is deemed essential by parents, teachers, schools, states, and the nation. When effective teaching is combined with student progress as the focus of staff development or school improvement efforts, assessment reveals an increase in learning gains occur (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Elmore, 1996; Marshall, 1996). The following table illustrates the components involved in Middle Tennessee's Work Sample design for pre-service teachers. These components are continuous and recursive in order to encourage pre-service teachers to address student needs, learning preferences, curriculum requirements, and the implications for instruction.

Table 1 Middle Tennessee's Work Sample Components

Middle Tennessee's Work Sample
1. **Contextual Factors**-The teacher uses information about the learning-teaching context and student individual differences to set learning goals and plan instruction and assessment.
2. **Learning Goals**-The teacher sets significant, challenging, varied and appropriate learning goals.
3. **Assessment Plan**-The teacher uses multiple assessment modes and approaches aligned with learning goals to assess student learning before, during and after instruction.
4. **Design for Instruction**-The teacher designs instruction for specific learning goals, student characteristics and needs, and learning contexts.
5. **Instructional Decision-Making**-The teacher uses ongoing analysis of student learning to make instructional decisions.
6. **Analysis of Student Learning**-The teacher uses assessment data to profile student learning and communicate information about student progress and achievement.
7. **Reflection and Self-Evaluation**-The teacher reflects on his or her instruction and student learning in order to improve teaching practice.

The Middle Tennessee's Work Sample Components were developed in conjunction with eleven other colleges of education involved in a partnership project (*Renaissance Group*). This Renaissance Partnership is engaged in ongoing research to promote and develop teacher quality and student learning. The Renaissance Partnership is finding evidence to support teacher work sampling as a method to document the effects of teacher performance on student learning outcomes. The work sample uses whatever form of assessment—authentic or standardized—the teacher develops to document increase or decrease in student learning.

Teacher performance is evident in student learning. Improving Teacher Quality provides the framework for best practices in teacher education to help train teachers to evaluate content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and assessment techniques—all of which are linked to student learning. Continued preparation of teachers will be should be integrated throughout the improving of teacher quality which needs to include in-depth content matter preparation and development both general and content-specific teaching methodology. This teacher quality improvement will allow schools to provide:

a. high-quality training for teachers which is rich in content knowledge and

b. appropriate models for implementation of classroom technology, which will enhance student learning.

Improving teacher quality should be concerned with providing participating LEAs (Local Educational Agencies) with assistance in showing that teacher performance impacts student learning. Improving teacher quality plans need to offer a method for equating teacher performance to student learning.

One method for equating teacher performance to student learning is to incorporate current research in work sampling methodology. The work sample helps focus on specific content areas as outlined by the *Tennessee State Curriculum Standards* (2002). This will help teachers evaluate skills for improvement and increase student learning in the classroom. Through assessment schools are held accountable for student learning and teachers are held accountable for student performance in the classroom. According to the Council of Chief State School Officers, forty-eight states have adopted statewide testing programs and thirty-six states issued a school performance "report card" to parents and the public. The work sampling is interested in the ability of a teacher to impact and show documentation of this impact on student learning because the business community, citizen groups and policy makers are requesting such evidence. Work sampling also realizes that accreditation standards, licensure requirements, and National Broad Certification demand such evidence. Most importantly, effective teachers want to have credible evidence that they advance learning in their classrooms and have a creditable source for reflective practices.

School improvement plans have shifted in focus from development of highly effective teachers to an evolving balance between effective teaching and increases in student learning. According to Bar and Tagg (1995), the fundamental problem with the focus on instruction rather

than on learning is that it "mistakes a means for and end." It is like saying the primary function of a baker is to knead the dough rather than produce quality bread. To focus on learning accepts accountability for the learning of all students, which is usually shown by assessment. With a focus on instruction (teaching), increasing outcomes requires an increase of resources and reconfiguring resources to make learning more efficient. A focus on both effective teaching and increases in student learning encourages both teacher and learner to experiment with and adjust the learning process to achieve best results.

There are key differences in the shift from highly effective teaching to a balance approach of effective teaching and student learning (Schalock and Myton, 2000). The fundamental differences between a focus on instruction and a focus on learning relate to seven attributes as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Seven Attributes

Defining Attribute	Focus on Effective Teaching	Focus on Student Learning
• Mission or purpose	Offer teaching	Produce learning
• Expectations	Different for different students	High standards for
• Progress in the system	Grade-to grade completion of courses	Performance on defined standards
• The learning environment	The class	Varies on the learner, learning target and learning context
• Nature of instruction	Same for all	Varies on the learner, learning target and learning context
• Time for teaching and learning	Same for all	Flexible
• Nature of assessment	Local, single form, teacher's objectives	Public, multiple forms, state or national standards
• Program evaluation	End-of-course evaluation	Comprehensive assessment of all components of the system

The outcomes of the work sampling should and do support the following:

- The teacher will develop the skills and competencies needed to become more accountable for the impact of their teaching on student learning in schools.
- By engaging in the work sample process, schools and teachers will become more focused on teacher performance linked to student learning, enriched teaching methods, and content area standards.
- Teachers will develop enhanced content area knowledge and will be provided with an opportunity for professional development in the areas of content and methods.
- The data and knowledge base related to teacher performance equating student learning will increase.

Work sampling can show a teacher's commitment to the alignment of state standards to local school curriculum and supporting student learning through the teaching of these standards. Also the work sample seeks to strengthen specific content areas with enhanced academic content and pedagogical skills. The teacher is provided with a model to use for continuous performance evaluation and improvement through the year for the development of effective teaching which impacts student learning.

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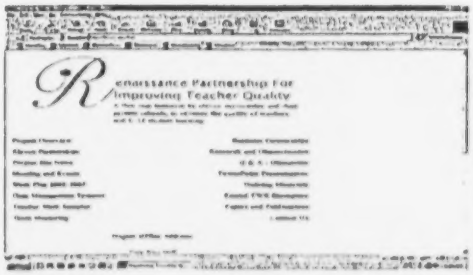
Middle Tennessee State University Results of Student Teacher Assessment

Concerning Renaissance Teacher Work Sample Concepts and Decision Making

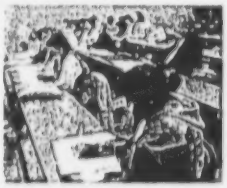
http://fp.uni.edu/itq



Renaissance Work Sample Components

7 Teaching Processes

- Contextual Factors
- Learning Goals
- Assessment Plan
- Design for Instruction
- Instructional Decision Making
- Analysis of Student Learning
- Reflection and Self-Evaluation



The 5 Areas of Assessment on The Student Teacher Instrument

(Handout of assessments in packet)

- 1. Decisions on major concepts and skills for the unit
- 2. Characteristics of school, class, individual students considered for planning unit
- 3. Decisions about what and how to teach specific learning activities
- 4 Adaptations to instruction
- 5. Determining learning gains

Fall 2001

1. **Decisions on major concepts and skills for the unit**

RenST(Renaissance Student Teachers)

Pre-assessment

Standards	35.2
Pre-assessment	16.7
Student needs	16.7
My beliefs	7.4

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Fall 2001

4. Adaptations to instruction

RenST Post-assessment		*NRenST Post-assessment*	
Reteach/review	29.0	*Reteach/review*	*27.9*
Adapt teaching	9.7	*Practice activities*	*11.6*
Alt. Activities for ability	9.7	*Individual help*	*11.6*
		Peer assistance	*11.6*

Fall 2001

5. Determining learning gains

RenST Pre-assessment	
Pre-assessment	**43.6**
Pre vs. post	**12.8**
Post –assessment	**7.7**

Fall 2001

5. Determining learning gains

RenST Post assessment		*NRenST Post-assessment*	
Pre vs. post	32.1	*Variety of evaluation*	*18.9*
Post-assessment	17.9	*Assess/eval.*	*16.2*
Graph of scores	10.7	*Quizzes*	*10.8*
		Q & A	*10.8*
		Unit test	*10.8*

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Results of Student Teacher Assessment on RTWS Concepts/Decision Making
Middle Tennessee State University Fall 2001

Renaissance Student Teachers (RenST) n=25
NonRenaissance Student Teachers (NRenST) n=17
Top responses for each question by percent of total responses

1. Decisions on major concepts and skills for the unit

RenST

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment	
Standards	35.2	Standards	35.7
Pre-assessment	16.7	Student needs	14.3
Student needs	16.7	Coop teachers	14.2
My beliefs	7.4	Pre-test/text	10.7

NRenST

Post-assessment	
Standards	34.1
Coop teachers	14.2
Textbook	11.4
Age/skill level	6.8

2. Characteristics of school, class, individual students considered for planning unit

RenST

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment	
Demographics	28.7	Student needs	50.0
Student needs	40.0	Demographics	22.2
Physical conds.	18.3	Physical conds.	16.7
Ext. influences	12.6	Ext. influences	11.1

NRenST

Post-assessment	
Student needs	52.0
Demographics	30.0
Physical conds.	10.0
Ext. influences	8.0

3. Decisions about what and how to teach specific learning activities

RenST

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment	
Student needs	65.8	Student needs	53.3
Physical conds.	12.2	Ext. influences	40.0
Ext. influences	9.8	Demographics	3.3
Demographics	4.9	Physical conds.	3.3

NRenST

Post-assessment	
Ext. influences	56.1
Student needs	39.0
Demographics	2.4
Physical conds.	2.4

4. Adaptations to instruction

RenST

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment	
Reteach/review	20.8	Reteach/review	29.0
Group activities	16.7	Adapt teaching	9.7
Peer tutoring	14.6	Alt. activities for ability	9.7
Challenge them	10.4		

NRenST

Post-assessment	
Review/reteach	27.9
Practice activities	11.6
Individual help	11.6
Peer assistance	11.6

5. Determining learning gains

RenST

Pre-assessment		Post-assessment	
Pre vs. post	43.6	Pre vs post	32.1
Formative eval.	12.8	Post-assessment	17.9
Post-assessment	7.7	Graph of scores	10.7

NRenST

Post-assessment	
Variety of eval.	18.9
Assess/eval.	16.2
Quizzes	10.8
Q & A	10.8
Unit test	10.8

Results of Student Teacher Assessment on RTWS Concepts
Middle Tennessee State University Spring 2003
Renaissance Student Teachers n=40
Top responses for each question by percent of total responses

	Pre-assessment		Post-assessment	
1. Decision on major concepts and skills for the unit				
	Standards	35.0	Standards	52.0
	Cooperating teachers	24.0	Cooperating teachers	35.0
	Student needs	14.4	Pre-assessment	4.0
	Pre-assessment	8.4	Textbook	2.0
2. Characteristics of school, class, individual students considered for planning the unit				
	Student concerns	38.0	Student concerns	43.9
	Demographics	32.5	Demographics	23.2
	Physical conds.	18.7	External influences	18.3
	External influences	10.8	Physical conds.	14.6
3. a. Decision about what to teach for specific learning activity				
	Student concerns	44.4	External influences	69.1
	External influences	51.4	Student concerns	30.9
	Physical conds.	2.8	Physical conds.	0
	Demographics	1.4	Demographics	0
3. b. Decision about how to teach specific learning activity				
	Student concerns	54.1	Student concerns	70.4
	Specific activities	25.5	External influences	16.7
	External influences	14.3	Physical conds.	13.0
	Demographics	4.1	Demographics	0
4. a. How to determine progress toward goals and objectives				
	Assessment	19.0	Formative assessment	26.2
	Formative/Informal	19.0	Assessments	13.1
	Question/answer	8.9	Discussion/Q&A	9.8
	Portfolio/ws/journal	8.9	Observation	8.2
4. b. Adaptations to instruction				
	Modify lesson	17.3	Reteach	30.8
	Individual help	11.1	Review	18.5
	Groups	11.1	Individual help	18.5
	Reteach differently	9.9	Peer tutoring	6.2
5. Determine learning gains				
	Post-assessment	37.0	Post-assessment	27.4
	Pre vs post	23.9	Pre vs post	25.5
	Post test analysis	13.0	Assessments	17.6
	Assessment	8.7	Graphs/charts	7.8

Student Teacher Pre-Assessment
RTWS Concepts

Name (optional)_____ **Grade Level** _____ **Date** _____
Think ahead to your student teaching and your class of students. Consider how you will plan and implement an entire instructional unit for your students. Briefly answer each of the following questions related to the unit. Use the back of this page if necessary.

1. How will you decide upon the major concepts and skills your students should learn during your instructional unit?

2. What characteristics of your school, class, and individual students will you consider as you plan the instructional unit?

3. a. How will you decide *what* to teach your students during each specific learning activity?

b. How will you decide *how* to teach your students during each specific learning activity?

4. a. How will you determine the progress toward the goals and objectives to help guide your instruction throughout the unit?

b. During most learning activities, some of your students will grasp *most* of the concepts and skills, others will grasp *some* of the concepts and skills, and still others will grasp *few* of the concepts and skills. What will you do when this happens?

5. After your instructional unit is over, how will you determine the learning gains made toward the objectives of the unit?

Student Teacher Post-Assessment
On Decision Making

Now that you have completed student teaching, we would like you to answer some questions relating to topics addressed in the portfolio. Consider how you planned and implemented an entire instructional unit for your students. Briefly answer each of the following questions related to a unit. If your planning and implementing during student teaching were different from what you expect to do when you have your own class of students, include that in your answer also. Your responses will not affect your student teaching grade or evaluation in any way. Use the back of the page if needed.

1. How did you decide upon the major concepts and skills your students should learn during your instructional unit?

2. What characteristics of your school, class, and individual students did you consider as you planed the instructional unit?

3. How did you decide what and how to teach your students during each specific learning activity?

4. During most learning activities, some of your students grasped *most* of the concepts and skills, others grasped *some* of the concepts and skills, and still others grasped *few* of the concepts and skills. What did you do when this happened?

5. After your instructional unit was over, how did you determine the learning gains made toward the objectives or goals of the unit?

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